

TIPS TO A SMOOTH OFFICER TRANSITION

One of your last and possibly most important responsibilities as an outgoing officer is to create a smooth and graceful transition between officers. Nothing is worse in a leadership role than having to re-invent the wheel, both the leader and the organization suffers. For this reason, your organization needs to have a leadership/ officer transition period.

Benefits of a good officer transition:

The RSO and officers will not have to re-invent the wheel each year, instead it can build and the programs can continue to grow.

Successful transitions will allow the RSO to grow and to continue without suffering from the “lame duck” period at the beginning of the school year.

The transition will bring closure to those officers leaving and make the incoming officers feel more confident in their position.

Timing of Elections

Do not wait until the last meeting of the year or the last week of classes to elect the new officers. It is recommended that you elect next year’s officers by April 1st. This will allow a month of transition (the longer the transition period the better the transition). In addition, if your RSO is applying for ASG funding this will give them the opportunity to request funding for events that will be held early in the fall semester. Funding for events prior to Sept. 30 must be requested in the spring.

Re-register your RSO and Update your Officers online before summer break

RSO’s must renew their registration with the Office of Student Activities every year. Registration is open April 15-September 15. Outgoing officers must add new officers online in order to avoid new officers being locked out of the system. Here is a list of what needs to be done for renewal:

- * Update officers online
- * Submit the re-registration package to the Office of Student Activities, ARKU A665
- * Complete online officer orientation
- * If your constitution has changed or the date of the constitution listed in the RSO database is more than 3 years old, please email an update constitution to rso@uark.edu.

Plan a time to have a Transition Meeting

Do not just drop off a binder or leave notes and say “Good Luck.” Make sure that the outgoing and incoming officers have a meeting to discuss issues and to answer any questions. Here are some questions to ask during the transition:

Old Officers

What did they struggle with?

What worked/ what did not?

How to improve significant programs?

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Who are the “friends” of your organization? (who have you collaborated with or has helped you out)

Advisors

What goals do you both have for the organization?

What do you, as an officer, hope to gain from this experience?

How much and what type of support do you need from the advisor?

New Officers

What are your goals for the organization?

What do you expect from each other?

What are your priorities for the coming year? (academic courses, work, other organizations)

What are your recruitment strategies?

How often do you, as officers, expect to meet and how often will the RSO meet?

Who is the “point” person for the summer? (to take care of any business during the summer)

Develop a clear understanding of each other’s “officer duties.”

Shares files and resources with new officers

Sharing files and passing on resources are crucial to a successful officer transition. As an outgoing officer you will want to pass on as much information as possible in order to assist with a successful year. Here is a list of some resources to pass on:

Minutes from past year’s meetings

Any descriptions of officer positions Email, website or listserv passwords

Any & all financial records (this includes budgets, current balances, ASG funding requests, etc.)

Membership Lists

Past years’ program notes/ evaluations

Past year’s calendars and schedules Contact information of important people/ offices on campus

List of basic operating procedures

Constitution/ bylaws

Status reports on any upcoming programs or issues

Book Meeting Rooms and Spaces for Next Year

Most organizations have some sort of recruitment meeting at the beginning of each year or if your organization is going to host a large event next year book NOW!

